

# Zera Shimshon

Profound Divrei Torah culled from the writings of the Gaon and Mekubal Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachman Michael Nachmeni zy"l, author of Sefer Zera Shimshon on Chumash and Toldos Shimshon on Pirkei Avos, who promised that all who study his words will be blessed with an abundance of good, wealth and honor, and will merit to see children and grandchildren thriving around their table.



Shemos תשפ"א

• Zera Shimshon - the Limud that brings Yeshuos •

גלייך 119

## אמרות שמשון

### Why Hashem Bestows Abundance Upon Us Even When We Aren't Fully Worthy

וְיָמַת יוֹסֵף וְכָל אָחָיו וְכָל הַדּוֹר הַהוּא וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל פָּרוּ וַיִּשְׂרְצוּ וַיִּרְבּוּ וַיַּעֲצֶמּוּ בְּמֵאד בְּמֵאד וַתִּמְלֵא הָאָרֶץ אֹתָם (שמות א ו-ז):

**Yosef died, and all his brothers and that entire generation. The Children of Israel were fruitful, and they flourished, increased and became strong - very very much so; and the land became filled with them.**

The Midrash (כ"ד א' ח) expounds on these Pesukim as follows. וימת יוסף וכל אחיו וכל הדור ההוא. ללמדך שכל זמן שהיה אחד מהם קיים הדור ההוא. ללמדך שכל זמן שהיה אחד מהם קיים מאותן שירדו למצרים לא שעבדו המצרים בישראל. ובני ישראל פרו וישרצו. אע"פ שמת יוסף ואחיו - אלהיהם לא מת, אלא ובני ישראל פרו וישרצו. Yosef died, and all his brothers and that entire generation: The fact that the Torah tells us of the death of Yosef and his generation, and only afterwards does it recount the Jews' enslavement to the Egyptians, is an indication that this was the sequence of events. *This is to teach you that as long as one of those who descended to Egypt with Yaakov was alive, the Egyptians did not subjugate the Jews.* The Children of Israel were fruitful, and they flourished: *Although Yosef and his brothers died, Hashem did not die. Rather, the Jews continued to multiply, as it states, 'The Children of Israel were fruitful and they flourished'.*

This Midrash begs for an explanation. First of all, why indeed didn't the Egyptians enslave the Jews as long as Yosef and his brothers were still alive? Secondly, what does the Midrash mean when it says, 'Although Yosef and his brothers died, Hashem did not die'; was there, so to speak, any possibility to think otherwise?

The following Midrash (כ"ד א' ח) describes what occurred after Yosef's death. כשמת יוסף הפרו ברית מילה, אמרו נהיה כמצרים, מכאן אתה. למד שמשוה מלך ביציאתן ממצרים, וכיון שעשו כן הפך הקב"ה האהבה שהיו - המצריים אוהבין אותן לשנאה, שנאמר הפך לבם לשנוא עמו להתנכל בעבדיו. *When Yosef died, the Jews abrogated the covenant of circumcision,*

for they said, "Let us be like the Egyptians". - You can learn this from the fact that Moshe circumcised the Jews upon their departure from Egypt. - And when they did this, Hashem transformed the love that the Egyptians had toward them into hatred, as it is stated, 'He transformed their hearts to hate His nation, to plot against His servants'.

In view of this, that the Jews abrogated the covenant of circumcision after Yosef died, we can clearly understand the Midrash which we quoted earlier. The Midrash tells us 'that as long as one of those who descended to Egypt with Yaakov was alive, the Egyptians did not subjugate the Jews'. The reason that the Egyptians did not at first enslave the Jews, is because, originally, the Egyptians actually loved the Jews. It was only after Yosef died, when the Jews abrogated the covenant, that Hashem caused the Egyptians to begin hating the Jews, and subsequently enslaved them as well.

Accordingly, we can also understand the ensuing Midrash that says, 'Although Yosef and his brothers died, Hashem did not die. Rather, the Jews continued to multiply, as it states, 'The Children of Israel were fruitful and they flourished'. For Hashem told Avraham Avinu in Parshas Lech Lecha (בראשית י"ז ב') as follows, *I will set My covenant between Me and you, and I will increase you most exceedingly.* From this Passuk we learn that that the continuity and growth of the descendants of Avraham is dependent on the merit of them adhering to the covenant.

Therefore, when the Jews no longer adhered to the covenant, the resulting ramification should have been an impediment to the growth and flourishing of the Jewish people. Nevertheless, because Hashem had promised Avraham that He would be a God to him and his descendants, He therefore did not forsake the Jewish people even though they had forsaken His covenant. This is what the Midrash implied when it said, 'Although Yosef and his brothers died, [and the Jews no longer adhered to the covenant, nevertheless] Hashem did not die [i.e. forsake them]. *Rather, the Jews continued to multiply.*

זרע שמשון פרשתנו אות ב

מתוך ברכת והבטחת הרב המחבר  
רבנו שמשון חיים נחמני זלה"ה  
בבקשתו ותחינתו בהקדמת ספריו

'למען אחי רעי ותלמידי ישאון את שמי על שפתם, ועל הטוב יזכר שמי בפיהם אחר מותי, כאשר בעשר לשונות של תפילה אני מחלה פניהם, ובעל הגמול ישלם כמיטב חיי אריכי ומזוני טפי לגומלי חסידים טובים'. ויעניכם תראינה בנים בני בנים כשתלי זיתים סביב לשולחנכם, חכמים ונבונים, וכתים מלאים כל טוב, גם עושר גם כבוד לא יסופו מורעכם'.

**The Zera Shimshon promised those who study his words:**

*"May your eyes merit to see children and grandchildren, wise and perceptive, thriving as olive shoots around your table. And may your homes be filled with an abundance of good, with wealth and honor never ceasing from amongst your progeny."*

## Why Pharaoh Felt the Need to Pretend as If He Did Not Know Yosef

וַיָּקָם מֶלֶךְ חָדָשׁ עַל מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדַע אֶת יוֹסֵף (שמות א ח)

*A new king arose over Egypt, who did not know of Yosef.*

The Gemara in Sotah (נ"א ע"א) brings two opinions in regard to the meaning of this Passuk. 'A new king arose over Egypt': *Rav and Shmuel dispute the meaning of this Passuk. One says that it refers to a genuinely new king, while the other says that it only refers to a king whose decrees were renewed. The one who says that it was a genuinely new king, derives this from the fact that it is written 'a new king'. The other one who says that it was only his decrees which were renewed, derives this from the fact that nowhere is it written that the previous king had died and that a new one reigned in his stead. 'Who did not know of Yosef': It means that he made it seem as if he did not know Yosef.*

There are two questions which we can pose on the second opinion, who understands that 'a new king arose', doesn't purport 'a new king', but rather 'a king whose decrees were renewed'. The first question is; the phrase 'renewed decrees', seems to imply that the king renewed a decree which had, in the past, been in effect but had somehow become forgotten. We need to understand which particular sidelined decree did Pharaoh renew; and why indeed did he renew it?

Secondly, the Passuk tells us that the king 'did not know of Yosef', and this opinion explains it to mean that he made it seem as if he did not know Yosef. This seems to imply that the king renewed harsh decrees against the Jewish People as if he had never known Yosef. Why does the Torah say that he renewed this decree contingent upon the fact that he made it seem as if he had never known Yosef? Perhaps the king openly acknowledged that he was acquainted with Yosef, but nevertheless renewed those harsh decrees in spite and in defiance of Yosef.



The Sefer Asara Ma'amaros discusses the profound Master Plan which Hashem orchestrated in order to arrange that Yosef should rule over the Egyptians before they would rule over the Jewish People. He did this so that when the Egyptians would eventually rule over the Jews, it would be considered as if the Jews were enslaved to Yosef and not to the Egyptians. This would be in accordance to the Halachic ruling that מה שקנה עבד קנה רבו (פסחים) - *whatever a slave acquires his*

*master acquires* [i.e. anything that a slave takes into his possession is automatically acquired by his master]; hence, because the Egyptians were enslaved to Yosef, the Jewish People who would in turn become enslaved to them would essentially be enslaved to Yosef. Hashem did this in order to prevent the Jews from becoming entirely subordinated to the Egyptians and thus totally submerged in the Egyptian impurity.



We can explain that the law which Pharaoh renewed, was not some harsh decree against the Jews, but rather a law concerning the standard to which an Egyptian monarch must be held to. This law is quoted in the Midrash (בר"ר פ"ט ז) as follows, 'מכתב בסקרידון של - פרעה שאין עבד מולך - *It was written in the Egyptian's code of laws that a slave may not rule over Egypt.* The reason why Pharaoh renewed this law was because he understood the concept that because Yosef was ruler over the Egyptians, his Jewish brethren were essentially enslaved only to him and not to the Egyptians. Pharaoh hoped that by renewing this law, he would retroactively invalidate Yosef's reign, which would inevitably result in the Jews being in the exclusive proprietorship of the Egyptian people. By doing this, Pharaoh hoped to entirely subordinate the Jews under the Egyptian influence and thereby assimilate them entirely to the Egyptian immoral culture.

Pharaoh's rationale, though, was mistaken and foolish. For had Yosef indeed been a slave, then renewing the Egyptian law would certainly invalidate his sovereignty. But because, in truth, Yosef was never a slave but was rather always a free man - as Yosef himself had clearly told Pharaoh after interpreting his dreams, 'I was kidnapped from the land of the Jews' - (בראשית מ טו) - therefore Yosef's reign never contradicted the law which stated that a slave may not rule over Egypt, and thus renewing that law wouldn't invalidate Yosef's perfectly legitimate rulership.

In light of all this, we can understand the insinuation of the Passuk according to the opinion that the 'new king', refers to 'a king whose decrees were renewed'. 'A new king arose over Egypt': Alludes to the king's attempt to renew the law that a slave may not rule over Egypt; in order to invalidate the reign of Yosef who at the outset was a slave. 'Who did not know of Yosef': He did this despite knowing the truth that Yosef was never actually a slave, but a free man who was kidnapped from his father's home.

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